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ABSTRACT

Since the number of women in public school administration has continued to decline nationwide, the authors sought to assess the effectiveness of four current models of women administration advocacy efforts. Loosely coupled under Project AWARE (Assisting Women to Advance through Research and Encouragement), the four models are sponsored and coordinated through the American Association of School Administrators and are funded by the Ford Foundation. The authors used a questionnaire and telephone interviews to gather data on the models' operations and effects. Model one, in New England, is an individual membership organization made up of six state units; model two is an internship program in North Carolina operated by a university women's center; model three provides training of individuals selected from state offices in the Southwest by a regional educational laboratory; and model four is an information exchange and linkage system operated by a monitoring organization in the South. The authors point out that the assessment data are too preliminary for a summative evaluation. However, they feel that there are indicators of success for each model. A copy of the questionnaire is appended. (Author/RW)

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The Effectiveness of Four Women Administration Advocacy Models

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ABSTRACT

Despite the passage of Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972, the number of women in public school administration continues to decline. Current economic and population data suggest that the trend is likely to continue unless advocacy efforts become more effective.

The objective of the paper is to describe and assess the effectiveness of four models of women administration advocacy efforts currently in operation, all loosely coupled under the title of Project AWARE. The major professional administration organization sponsors and coordinates the four models sponsored by AASA: (1) an individual membership organization structured as a confederation of six state units; (2) an individual internship program designed and operated by a university center for women; (3) a training model involving individuals selected from state education agencies, governors' offices, and legislative staff, operated by a regional educational laboratory; and (4) an information exchange and linkage model, operated by an organization committed to monitoring regional sex and minority equality.

The paper represents a rationale for each model with a discussion of its effect in terms of stated objectives. The paper also describes the coordinating mechanism and presents data indicating the positive impact of sponsorship by the association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF FOUR WOMEN ADMINISTRATION ADVOCACY MODELS

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INTRODUCTION

One indicator of the persistent sex discrimination in elementary and secondary schools in the nation is the limited number of women administrators - fewer than 13 percent according to data from the National Center for Education Statistics. Further, since the passage of Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972, the number of women in administrative positions has declined two percentage points annually. Data reported by the National Association of Administrative Women in Education (Why Aren't Women Administering Our Schools, 1975) indicate substantial downward spirals for female principalships: in 1960, 57 percent of the elementary school principalships in the nation were held by women. By 1970 the figure had decreased to 21 percent and by 1975 to 13.5 percent. Between 1950 and 1960, the number of women holding junior high school and senior high school principalships had decreased from 12 percent and 6 percent respectively to 3.8 percent of all secondary school principalships. By 1975 only 2.9 percent of the junior high and 2.4 percent of the senior high school principalships were held by women - although staff composition in these schools was 67 percent female.

Current forces at work - school district consolidation, declining enrollments, rising costs and continued inflation, a growing conservatism in social values - suggest that the trend is likely to continue unless advocacy efforts become more effective.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This paper describes and seeks to make a preliminary assessment of the effectiveness of four different models of women administration advocacy efforts currently in operation, all loosely coupled under the title of Project AWARE (Assisting Women to Advance through Research and Encouragement). Coordination and sponsorship of the models are provided by the American Association of School Administrators with funding from the Ford Foundation. The time frame for the report is November 1, 1979 through November 1, 1980. Descriptions are based upon project responses to a nine-item instrument (Appendix A), with further documentation provided in telephone interviews.

EXAMINATION OF THE MODELS

MODEL ONE

Model One is a regional professional membership organization structured as a confederation of six state affiliates. Women aspiring to or already in administrative positions in local elementary and secondary schools in the states of Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont are solicited as dues-paying members of the New England Coalition of Educational Leaders, Inc. (NECEL), with activities tying them to both their state organization and the regional organization.

The model is a direct outgrowth of a two-day Boston conference in the spring of 1976, to which New England women administrators were invited. The 45 who attended explored the idea of a network of female educational leaders. They determined that many within the group had obtained leadership positions because of some type of sporadic, informal networking; and that a systematized networking of women within and across the six states linked to information about job opportunities could produce visible re-

sults. One year later the group assessed the program: women already in administrative positions had initiated and sustained the network, but they felt that the embryonic movement needed an organizational structure, program goals, and financial assistance to stabilize. In that 1977 conference the group determined to incorporate in Massachusetts, set up a confederation of state units or affiliates, be governed by a confederated board (three officers elected by the membership-at-large and six state-elected directors), with overarching program goals - some to be achieved by state affiliates and some by the region acting as a whole. The organization was to seek equity in educational administration not through promoting separation, but as a support organization mainstreaming women into management. Thus was born the New England Coalition of Educational Leaders.

The objectives of NECEL are (1) to build a network and to support programs which promote women in educational administration, and (2) to increase the numbers and effectiveness of women in administration.

NECEL's methods for reaching these objectives is to place major responsibility on each woman and in each state. Each member pays annual dues of $25.00 ($15 to the regional office and $10 to the state). The membership within a state constitutes a state affiliate; each affiliate then is charged with developing workshops, conferences, and social events (1) to break down the isolation felt by female administrators, (2) to provide job-related information informally, (3) to provide opportunity for mentoring relationships to develop, and (4) to enhance NECEL's capacity to collect information on job openings and on the current availability of female administrators.

The regional NECEL office assists in expanding the membership, organizing region-wide conferences, providing technical assistance to state affiliates, producing a quarterly newsletter, publishing lists of available administrative jobs, and linking to other administrative groups.

During the first year of operation, most activities have centered on reaching the first objective, building a network and developing a support program. Project data document the following:

- membership has grown from 100 to 500.
- 1600 people have participated in 25 local, state, and regional meetings; meetings have provided both awareness and training, as well as access to regionally and nationally prominent educators.
- 4 quarterly newsletters, focusing on regional educational issues and advancements, have been published and disseminated to 1500 people in the region.

Other activities have been designed to reach the second objective: increasing the number and effectiveness of women administrators. The Kelsey report (Women in Educational Administration in New England, 1978) provided a baseline for monitoring change. Figure 1 presents the data by state:

Figure 1

Summary Chart: Women Administrators in New England

Women in Educational Leadership	State	Supt.	Asst. Supt.	H.S. Prin.	Jr. High Prin.	Elem. Prin.
102 (13%)	Maine	0(0%)	1(4%)	0 (0%)	1(2%)	100(24%)
49 (10%)	New Hampshire	0(0%)	1(2%)	0 (0%)	1(3%)	47(17%)
73 (17%)	Vermont	0(0%)	0(0%)	0 (0%)	2(8%)	71(29%)
325 (13%)	Massachusetts	2(1%)	9(5%)	3 (1%)	5(2%)	306(21%)
53 (15%)	Rhode Island	0(0%)	2(2%)	1 (2%)	1(2%)	49(23%)
123 (10%)	Connecticut	4(3%)	5(6%)	5 (4%)	5(3%)	104(14%)
725 (13%)	Totals	6(1%)	18(5%)	9 (1%)	15(2%)	677(20%)

Percentages above are the percent of the total persons in that category who are women.

Educational Leadership is a combination of the five positions.

(Kelsey, p. 19)

One percent of the superintendents (six in two states) and one percent of the high school principals (nine in three states) were women. The largest number of women administrators, 20 percent, were elementary school principals.

To change those data, NECEL specifically

1. created a talent pool, a listing of nearly 100 credentialled women members available for administrative positions; and

2. created a job bank, a regular publication of administrative jobs available. Fifteen comprehensive job listings were published and distributed to NECEL membership.

Data on the precise utility of each were not verifiable; i.e., (a) there appeared to be evidence that school boards/administrators may have accessed the talent pool for names of women in order to comply with affirmative action guidelines without in fact actually considering the women as candidates, and (b) the job bank was an information publication designed for use of members, but there was no requirement that they report to NECEL on their use of it.

On the other hand, data do indicate that credentialled women did apply for administrative openings[1], and that women were hired. Figure 2, from the Bailey, et al. report ("Job Monitoring Survey Report, Fall 1980"), suggests, in fact, that a large percentage of positions were filled by women in relation to the actual percentage of female applicants. For example: in Maine, 10 percent of the applicants for 65 jobs were female. Twenty-six percent of those positions were filled by females. Even with the limited

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[1] Traditional explanations for the limited number of women in administrative positions include (1) that they are not credentialled, and (2) that they do not apply.

rate of return reflected in the table, the evidence is strong that women applied in smaller numbers than men but were hired at a rate exceeding that of men.

Figure 2

Return Rate, Reported Vacancies, Percentage of Female Applicants, and Percent of Positions Filled by Women

	% Return Rate	Reported Vacancies	Percentage of Female Applicants	Percent of positions filled by women
Connecticut	44%	77	15%	33%
Maine	51%	65	10%	26%
Massachusetts	46%	120	13%	18%
New Hampshire	41%	26	9%	31%
Rhode Island	68%	27	7%	26%
Vermont	30%	28	7%	54%

The Bailey study further points out that women typically applied for and were hired for elementary principalships and for assistant principalships. (See Figure 3 from the Bailey study.)

Figure 3

Elementary and Assistant Principalships

	Reported Vacancies	% of women applicants	% of women hired
Elementary School Principal	85	20%	53%
Assistant Principal	113	17%	23%

Data collected by NECEL on local and state level workshops, on job bank information, and on the one-to-one counseling provided to membership has been event-specific and formative in nature. It has led to steps in three areas: (1) the strategy of maintaining a talent pool is being re-examined. (The project anticipates that the membership can be better served by using resources for providing information on administrative vacancies rather than for maintaining a talent pool); ways of encouraging and supporting relevant litigation as a tool for achieving equity are being considered; and (3) three additional states are being added to the confederation: New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania.

It is too early for summative data to be collected, but growth in individual memberships, attendance at workshops with travel, meals and lodging paid by participants, and the addition of state affiliates all indicate that NECEL is achieving its first objective, that of building a network and supporting programs which promote women in administration. The project now is collecting data to verify the extent to which the number of female administrators is increasing or decreasing.

MODEL TWO

Model Two is an individual internship program designed and operated by a state university in a newly-created Center for Women in Educational Leadership. The model was conceived and initiated at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill by the College of Education, concerned with the lack of female managers at all levels of public education in the state of North Carolina in 1978.[1] The objective of the model is to increase the

[1] The major driving force generally is conceded to be the Dean, Dr. William Self, a former superintendent of the Charlotte-Mecklenberg School District.

number of women in leadership positions in North Carolina in the 1980's. To meet this objective, the project has designed a two-pronged program, an individualized career development program and a systemic intervention strategy, the two working in tandem. The two-day training and screening workshop yields a profile of need for each candidate, at the same time she receives minimal training in several key areas. Should she be selected, this profile guides the Center in planning a two-week intensive training program for her, consisting of training appropriate to the educational organization in which she is interning, assertion skills, communication skills, and image building and stress management skills. In addition, she receives training in career mapping strategies, goal setting, and problem solving.

Concurrent with development of the individual is the development of the educational organization of which she is a part. The project staff works with school staff at all levels, using awareness training programs and consultations to address the insensitivities, unconscious biases, and sterectypical behaviors within the system which tend to mitigate against the success of a woman in a top leadership position.

During the first year of operation, project activities have centered on reaching the objective of increasing the number of women in educational leadership positions by trying to achieve two enabling objectives: developing state-wide support for such a program and identifying potential female candidates.

A first activity was selecting and organizing a statewide advisory board of businessmen, industrialists, political leaders, educators and philanthropists to provide counsel and assist in soliciting funds. Thirty-one persons were named to this board. A second activity was the development of a method of identification and screening of potential candidates:

local school superintendents were asked to nominate women with the potential for top leadership positions and to send them at school expense to two-day sessions with Center staff. The two-day program was designed both to test women's skills and to provide training in problem-solving and personal communication. Four such workshops served 15 major school districts: Charlotte-Mecklenberg, Winston-Salem, Forsyth, Greensboro, High Point, Guilford, Asheville, Buncombe, Watauga, Northwestern District, Western District, Raleigh, Durham, and Chapel Hill. One hundred twenty women have attended these sessions, and profiles have been drawn for them. A third type of activity has been to communicate program goals throughout the state. More than two dozen media interviews, program presentations at annual meetings of five major administration associations, and three North Carolina Governor's Leadership Conferences have occurred. A fourth type of activity has been to develop a prototypic two-week training program, with year-long support workshops for the interns selected. Underway is selection of interns, each of whom will serve a year-long term in an organization which assists in selecting her and in paying her stipend.

At the initiation of the project, baseline data gathered by the staff from 1979 state department records indicated that 90 percent of elementary school teachers and 58 percent of secondary school teachers were female but that only nine percent of the elementary and secondary school administrators were female, and that less than one percent (1 of 145) superintendents were female.

Project records today document that recently a second female superintendent has been selected for the Chapel Hill-Carrboro school district to begin the 1981 school year, and that one workshop participant has been moved into a higher management position.

Project evaluation has centered on the two-day workshops and on the

training materials under development. Formative pre-post data have led to revisions in each.

One indicator of success is that the Department of Public Instruction has recently contracted with the Center to provide the same type of training to personnel on staff.

MODEL THREE

Model Three is an information and experience access model for women in management in state departments of education, governors' offices, and education committee legislative staff in the six-state geographical service area of Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL): New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi.

The model is an outgrowth of an SEDL project funded by the National Institute of Education (NIE) to provide planning and policy information to Chief State School Officers and other top educational policymakers in the six state area. This NIE-funded project monitors trends in nine non-instructional areas (such as accountability) in a monthly publication; produces brief quarterly policy analysis papers authored by national authorities on current educational legal and financial issues; holds invitational symposia on current critical issues such as governance and competency-based education; and provides technical assistance in areas such as energy management, statewide computer systems, and state personnel appraisal systems.

Although the project was conceptualized, proposed, and staffed by SEDL female staff, all of the state participants (top decisionmakers) were male. Model Three was thus designed as a method to provide to women in state departments of education access to some of these same materials and experiences. Because of the decisionmaking processes in each state regard-

ing educational resources, however, women in other state-level positions were regarded as appropriate participants. Objective of the project is to enhance the influence of women in state-level policymaking and decision-making through access to people and information significant to policy-making. A directory of participants and a bimonthly paper began communication among the women in the six states, and within each state three roundtables were held with nationally recognized experts on both policy and management issues. In two states the sessions were also opened to male supervisors. Project staff met with all chief State School Officers in mid-year to assess progress, collected formative data on the products and the sessions in order to make revisions, and held a major stocktaking and planning session with representatives from the six states.

Indepth interviews of a sampling of participants by an external consultant has complemented the consumer-satisfaction type of data collected by the staff. The women rated the materials and roundtables high, but asked for region-wide meetings to combat their sense of isolation and to provide greater access to notables. These requests are being met with a regional spring conference and with informal consultant visits to each state department in the next several months.

Baseline data collected by the project in 1978 indicated that no women were in deputy or cabinet positions in the state departments of education, although three were at the next level (two in New Mexico and one in Texas). The proportion of women in all agencies dropped precipitately as positions became more rarefied in terms of influence on policy.

Since that time, though the project is careful to attribute no direct

causal relationship, two states have made significant changes:[1] 20 percent of the top management in Arkansas are women; 14 percent in Texas. Further, the Oklahoma State Department of Education has promoted several women to the category of "officials and administrators" so that 16 percent of these now are women. That agency has also held a training session in financial management for female employees.

One unintended consequence is that a project staff member was hired by a state department to direct its statewide accountability study.

MODEL FOUR

Model Four is a monitoring, information, and linkage model, operated by the Southern Coalition for Educational Equity (SCEE), a nonprofit agency organized to improve the status of women and minorities in educational leadership. The model is an outgrowth of the 1978 planning of a group of educators, lawyers, and civil rights organizers to establish a coalition especially focused on combatting inequities in public education in the South. It serves eleven states: Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Florida, Louisiana, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia. Eighteen board members - all female, largely educators and lawyers, and 50 percent minority - govern operation of the project.

The model has four objectives: (1) expanding the network of individuals and organizations in the Southern states working for race and sex equity in public schools; (2) increasing the number and effectiveness of

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[1] In each case a new Chief State School Officer - one a regional advisor to the project - reorganized the department.

minorities and women in educational administration; (3) disseminating information regarding federal educational programs and policies, funding sources, grievance procedures, training opportunities; and (4) monitoring local and state school systems and federal civil rights agencies to support their compliance with or enforcement of such laws as Title IX, Title VII, Section 504, and the Vocational Education Act.

To achieve these objectives, the project has collected and aggregated data on local school administration in the 11 states (Edwards, "Report Shows Few Minority and Women Administrators," 1980), and disseminated the information both within and beyond the Southern states. These data indicate that while White males comprise only 16 percent of the teaching staff, they comprise 85 percent of its administration. Of the 1,723 local superintendents in the 11 states, in 1979-80 two were Black women, 22 were White women, and 19 were Black males - thus 96 percent of the superintendencies were held by White males. 1980-81 data show an increase of two White women superintendents to a total of 24.

In addition to collecting these data, the project has linked itself through formal communication mechanisms with approximately 300 individuals and agencies working toward equity; published its first newsletter; met in one-to-one counseling situations with over 100 minorities and women aspiring to educational leadership; set up a job information exchange advertising 60 administrative vacancies and referred women and minorities for jobs in Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, and South Carolina.

Major tools of the project are data-based testimony and litigation. During its first year, in conjunction with the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), the organization completed and presented major testimony at Georgia hearings on equity in vocational education, seeking to make major legislative, regulatory, and funding changes. It also examined the histor-

ical employment practices of one school system in Georgia, and presented its documented findings to school board members. Subsequently other minority and women administrators were hired for administrative positions.

COORDINATION

The four models - (1) NECEL, an individual membership organization structured as a confederation of six New England states; (2) the University of North Carolina Center for Women in Educational Leadership, an internship program for women aspiring to top management; (3) SEDL's Women's Leadership Project, an information and experience access model for women managers in 6 South and Southwestern state departments of education seeking to expand their roles in state policy decisionmaking; and (4) SCEE, a monitoring, information exchange, and linkage model - are all linked by the American Association of School Administrators (AASA), the major membership organization of practicing school superintendents. The Executive Committee of AASA serves as the Advisory Committee for the entire Project AWARE, and the Director of its Office of Minority Affairs convenes the project directors regularly to check progress and exchange ideas, publishes a project newsletter for national visibility, and consults with project staff on individual needs. She has assisted in the design of two additional Project AWARE models, one at the University of Oregon in Eugene and a second with the Arizona Association of School Administrators. Project directors of all four models indicate that the single most significant positive factor assisting in meeting their goals, other than funding, is this sponsorship by AASA. The organization legitimates the efforts of the groups.

Funding by the Ford Foundation has been integral to each model. In fact, the limited but measurable progress shown by each is likely not to have occurred at all, since the efforts do not duplicate others in existence,

and since funding has not been forthcoming for these efforts from the federal government or from other sources.

DISCUSSION

The approaches of each advocacy model are highly diverse. Each effort evolved independently in its own setting, with institutions or staff approaching the Ford Foundation for support. The Foundation linked the projects to each other with AASA as a coordinating mechanism, and asked the project directors to use each other as resources. This relationship has undoubtedly impacted each of the models; and has begun a substantive relationship among staff not likely to have known each other.

Only one model, NECEL, was organized by the potential participants for themselves. Both the University of Carolina model and the SEDL model grew out of data-based needs in particular environments, but are relying heavily upon systems and leadership already in place in those environments to change the systems and leadership; the SCEE model is committed to fighting inequities in the system on behalf of the participants, using data and litigation. Both the strength and the irony of the entire effort is that it is officially sponsored by "the good old boy" organization with the greatest prestige in the nation and the one organization likely to change the most if the models are successful.

CONCLUSION

In summary, it seems reasonable in this first examination of these efforts to assume that there are indicators of success for each project, though they do not yield to comparison at this point. As projects stay closely tied, the impact of each model upon the others may change the models in ways not yet predictable but in fact totally appropriate. It may also be that project staff need to look for intermediate success indicators

which can be compared: are more women joining AASA? Are more women applying for management jobs? Are women becoming increasingly visible in testifying before legislatures? Are more women seeking positions which command resources and authority? Do women travel to major professional conventions as frequently as men?

It may be that outcomes of each effort cannot be measured accurately. "Confounding factors" - competing, alternative explanations may be so great in number that net outcome or impact cannot be really assessed. As the staffs for each model continue to collect data, it is likely however that gross outcome effects can be characterized and that these may provide direction to those who seek a way to increase the numbers of women in administration.

Appendix A

PROJECT AWARE QUESTIONNAIRE

A. Description of Project (as designed when your project first started)

I. Need
(Give demographics specific to your geographical areas: what was the total number of administrators, number at each level, what percent are women at each level, what are salaries, what kinds of credentialling do women have? How many were members/officers in the school administrators' group? On job search committees? Teaching administration courses in colleges?)

II. Objectives
(Tell what goals your project defined, in relation to the needs above. In other words, what did you plan to achieve to change those demographics?)

III. Procedures
(Describe your model. How did you plan to achieve your objectives? How did you plan to measure results?)

B. What Has Actually Occurred

I. Achievements
(Which objectives did you reach? Have there been any unplanned achievements or gains in the area? Provide a calendar of events of what your project has done and indicate quantities of people and events.)

II. Problems
(What things, foreseen and unforeseen, have occurred? Do you know why?)

C. What Kind of Impact Has the Project Had?
(Tell what you have accomplished - and how you have measured it.)

D. The Single Most Significant Thing your Project Has Done

E. How Has your Project Interacted with the AASA Coordinating Model (Effie's)?

F. How Has your Project Interacted with the other Models?
How Has This Relationship Affected your Project?

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